

2006 Local Accomplishments

AID FOR TOWNS IN THE 13TH SENATE DISTRICT

A very important part of my job representing the people of the 13th state Senate District is ensuring Cheshire, Meriden, Middlefield and Middletown receive their fair share of state funding. I am pleased to report the following grants and reimbursements from the state:

Total Education Grants	\$74,914,200	This funding is an increase of \$3,350,085 over last year's budget
Town Aid Road Fund (TAR)	\$968,063	
Mashantucket Pequot/Mohegan Grants	\$5,546,996	
Local Capital Improvements (LoCIP)	\$1,061,180	
Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT)	\$13,732,919	
Extra Property Tax Relief for 2006	\$1,243,053	
Totals	\$97,466,381	

Good News for Middletown Schools

Moody Elementary School's 13-year old roof is obsolete. It was only meant to be a ten-year roof, and it leaks. Middletown was technically ineligible for state funds to replace it, but I negotiated with the state Department of Education and won 50% funding for the project. Our arrangement for the city and state to split the cost is fair; the school gets a new roof with a longer life span and those inside will spend their days in a healthier environment.

Another school construction project will receive highly sought-after state funding next year on an accelerated timetable. \$106 million for a new Middletown High School is notable because voters just approved the corresponding and prerequisite local bonding referendum in April. Ordinarily, state matching grants for new school construction would take a year—or more—to materialize after local funding is authorized, but it was clear to me this Middletown High School project couldn't wait and Middletown students shouldn't have to. Middletown helped make its own case with the overwhelming margin in favor of the project.

Fighting Blight in Our Neighborhoods

When property owners repeatedly fail to comply with local housing, zoning, health and safety codes they create hazardous conditions, drain municipal resources, and selfishly degrade property values of other neighborhood parcels. I wrote a new law to help Connecticut cities address these recurring problems. The law outlines a suggested process for local governments. Highlights include documentation of repeated instances of non-compliance and a special assessment on these parcels so violators pay for the costs incurred for: police, fire, public health, public works, and sanitation inspections; enforcement; and mitigation services.



Middlefield's Lake Besek

Homeowners near Lake Besek in Middlefield continue to benefit from state-financed improvements there. Years ago I helped secure funds for the Mattabesek Bridge to improve access, and a new sewer line to preserve the water quality and environmental integrity of the lake. This year I helped push legislation through the Senate requiring the state DEP to adequately draw down the lake's water level each fall to better protect docks and waterfront property. The agreement details different drawdown levels every other year to ensure adequate environmental protection for all lake species.

A Message to My Constituents



Dear Neighbors,

On May 3rd, the 2006 legislative session came to a close. Our state Constitution dictates the beginning and closing times for each legislative session, and this year was the shortest possible—only 85 days. In this short time, the General Assembly passed significant initiatives to make Connecticut a better place to work, live and educate our children. I have included some highlights of the session in this newsletter.

I am especially proud that a bipartisan budget was adopted that provides tax relief on automobiles, real estate and businesses while returning money to cities and towns to help hold down local property taxes. This includes an increase—from \$400 to \$500—on the state property tax credit.

Have a safe and memorable summer.

Sincerely,
Tom Gaffey
Thomas P. Gaffey
State Senator, 13th District

Stay Informed...

For the latest information on the issues affecting your district, please visit my Web site:
www.senatedems.ct.gov/Gaffey.html



TO RECEIVE MORE INFORMATION on any of the following issues, fill out this form and mail it to me, e-mail or call my office. Make sure to give your name and mailing address and indicate which issues you're interested in. My contact information is listed above to the right.

- ☐ Seniors
- ☐ Business
- ☐ Land Use
- ☐ Environment
- ☐ Crime
- ☐ Education
- ☐ Children
- ☐ Municipalities

Name:

Address:

Town: Zip:

E-mail:

State Senator
Thomas P. Gaffey

Legislative Office Building, Room 3100, Hartford, CT 06106-1591
Capitol Phone 860-240-0425, or 1-800-842-1420
E-mail Gaffey@senatedems.ct.gov
Web www.senatedems.ct.gov/Gaffey.html



I'm proud to represent the 13th state Senate District which includes the communities of Cheshire, Meriden, Middlefield and Middletown



CONNECTICUT JOBS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

2006 Legislative Initiatives

Since 1991, Connecticut has experienced stagnant job growth. My Senate Democratic colleagues and I initiated a comprehensive plan to address the need for job growth in order to steer our state toward a brighter future. Our legislative package invests in education, jobs, university/business partnerships, transportation improvements and the promotion of promising fuel cell technologies that have been developed right here in our own backyard.

Highlights of our successful initiative include:

- **Elimination of the Manufacturing Machinery and Equipment property tax** to attract more manufacturing jobs to Connecticut, especially the cutting-edge, precision manufacturing that is critical to our future economy
- **A Business Advocate's office** to serve as a one-stop contact point for businesses to access government assistance and cut through red tape
- **Linking promising new businesses to the university expertise** that can help bring innovative products to market
- **A Center for Entrepreneurship** that will assist promising technologies—including fuel cells—develop right here in our state
- **More funding for incumbent worker training programs**, provided by regional workforce development boards, to help workers learn new and valuable skills
- **Creation of business incubators to help grow the small business ideas** that will fuel our future economy and improve job creation across the state
- **Development Research and Economic Assistance Matching (DREAM) grants** that supplement and increase small businesses' access to federal research grants
- **Encouraging more engineering and doctoral research graduates to stay and work in Connecticut** through a 'Scholar-to-Work' system which ensures that innovation and creativity will remain a hallmark of Connecticut's future in the growing world marketplace
- **Partnerships between local schools and businesses** to help more students master math and science as building blocks to careers in competitive fields
- **Teacher 'externships'** that help link the skills taught in classrooms to those sought by employers, and providing opportunities for students to participate in internship and job-shadow experiences that will help them build relevant job skills
- **Asserting Connecticut's position as a global leader in the fuel cell industry** by improving clean energy alternatives in ways that grow jobs in this highly skilled sector
- **Tax incentives to attract movie companies** to film their productions here in Connecticut
- **Promoting nanotechnology**—an industry that works at the molecular level—to establish Connecticut as a leader in developing complex materials sold to businesses around the world

STATE SENATOR TOM GAFFEY 13TH DISTRICT

Working for Connecticut's Future

Roadmap to Connecticut's Economic Future

The gridlock that clogs our highways poses a significant threat to Connecticut's economic future. The General Assembly passed groundbreaking legislation that makes major investments in mass transit and plans for our future transportation infrastructure. The bill targets \$1 billion in spending for new and expanded commuter rail services, a new dedicated busway, and investments to encourage development around our transportation infrastructure, especially mass transit. This investment will help take trucks and cars off of our highways and move toward a less-congested future.



Allowing Cash Discounts for Gasoline and Banning Zone Pricing

The Senate adopted what would have been a "first-in-the-nation" ban on gasoline zone pricing. The proposal prohibited gasoline refiners and producers from establishing price zones based on geography or other criteria. The legislation also allowed gasoline retailers to provide cash discounts to their customers, and required retailers to set prices based on the cost of gasoline in their possession and not on anticipated spikes in the market. Unfortunately, this bill did not become law.



Access to Imaging Services

Imaging services, such as MRIs and PET scans, are crucial in the diagnosis and proper treatment of certain diseases. However, some insurance companies have set copayments for these services so high that they are cost-prohibitive. A new law I sponsored will set limits on the copayments that Connecticut-regulated insurance companies charge for these services, helping to ensure patients do not forgo these tests because of an inability to pay.

Developmental Needs of Kids with Cancer

Radiation and chemotherapy can treat cancer, but evidence suggests that they may also cause developmental and cognitive impairments, which may be difficult to detect until years later. Testing early in the treatment can establish a baseline, which can be used for comparisons later. A new law will require Connecticut-regulated insurance companies to pay for this neurological testing on kids who are undergoing treatment for cancer.

Connecticut's Farms

Trumpeting our Connecticut-grown farm products is excellent publicity for our state. We passed legislation that requires the Department of Agriculture to establish a campaign, including television and radio advertisements, to promote the advantages of purchasing these products. In addition, we expanded the types of products that can be sold at farmers' markets. We also provided

In early June, I participated in a town meeting-style discussion on positive alternatives for youth who are challenged by a world of violence and crime. The meeting was videotaped by Court TV at the Boys Club within the Juvenile Training School in Middletown, and it facilitated an open discussion between young men and community leaders.

funding to UConn to expand their Integrated Pest Management program, which promotes pest control through safe and effective methods and is crucial for crop productivity and quality.

Campaign Finance Reform and Ethics

We continued to strengthen our ethics laws in response to unprecedented corruption that occurred in our state. Legislation this year prohibits a governor's spouse from receiving honoraria and bans a governor from lobbying the state for at least one year after leaving office. We also continued to improve our strongest-in-the-nation campaign finance reform legislation by protecting the system's integrity in the event of a court challenge and further limiting political action committees (PACs).



Recognizing Our Veterans

The debt owed our state's veterans can never be paid in full. During the 2006 session, the legislature continued

to recognize the service of our brave men and women by passing new laws aimed at paying part of this debt. These new laws include exempting disability payments from determining eligibility for certain income-based property tax exemptions for veterans, extending the same protections to state service members assigned to state duties as they would be entitled to on federal duty, and expanding the definition of veteran to include reservists and National Guardsmen.

Banning Internet or E-mail "Phishing"

The legislature adopted tough standards regarding the use of the Internet or e-mail messaging—known as "phishing"—to obtain a person's identifying information by posing

as an online business. The attorney general or victims of phishing may sue to recover damages and restrain the offender from further violations. Courts may award up to \$25,000 or actual damages, whichever is greater. If the offender is found to be a persistent violator, the court may award triple damages.



With the help of an increasing budget surplus, we were able to make many improvements to our existing FY '07 budget. Most important, we were able to pass this budget on time and with bipartisan support. We wisely used state resources to make significant investments in programs beneficial to the health, safety and education of Connecticut's residents. In addition, we are funding a cutting-edge economic development program designed to create the kind of jobs needed to keep Connecticut vital and competitive in the 21st century.

We increased vital aid to cities and towns by \$60 million—an action necessary to help keep local property taxes down; deposited approximately \$350 million into the Rainy Day Fund; and fully funded the state Teachers' Retirement Fund in both FY '06 and FY '07 with \$246 million from the state surplus. Finally, one of our greatest achievements in this budget was to fight any efforts to repeal the current property tax credit on the state income tax. In fact, we successfully fought to increase the car and property tax credit from \$400 to \$500.